Met Office helping prepare for winter road maintenance

17 September 2012 - Met Office scientist, Alberto Arribas, will be discussing how significant worldwide environmental changes affect weather in the UK at Cold Comfort 2012, a winter conference for the road industry, this week.

There are many factors which can influence the UK's winter climate - such as El Niño and La Niña, Arctic sea ice, Solar UV output, the North Atlantic Oscillation, and others. None of these work in isolation, but all combine to influence climate on both regional and global scales. The Met Office is at the forefront of research to understand this complex relationship.

In recent years the UK has seen extremes of winter cold and snow along with heavy summer rains which brought disruption across the UK.

The Met Office is leading the way and working hard to push forward our understanding of the drivers of the weather in the UK and translate this into a format to help operational services within the road sector.

Such progression is indicative of the kind of world-leading research being done at the Met Office. Our ongoing efforts to improve longer-range weather forecasts will help road networks forward plan and mitigate the effects of extreme weather, when used with our short-range forecasts.

These forecasting advances are being integrated into operational products such as OpenRoad and the Met Office's innovative, route-based forecasts which provide forecasts for individual routes within a network. This provides local authorities and transport agencies with the ability to identify specific problem areas on routes and tailor treatment accordingly.

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